

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /056 W

-----010040Z 014047 /73

R 010018Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2471

USCONS MEXICO BY POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 08630

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MX

SUBJECT: EXCELSIOR INCIDENT

REF: MEXICO 7841

SUMMARY: GOM IS NOT GOING TO REINSTATE SCHERER GARCIA TEAM OF JOURNALISTS IN EXCELSIOR AND, WHILE IT HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY SILENT, HAS INFORMALLY PUT OUT STORY THAT INTERIOR SECRETARY REYES HEROLES ONLY INTENDED A "RECONCILIATION" BETWEEN CONFLICTING PARTIES OF THE EXCELSIOR COOPERATIVE. IMPORTANCE OF THIS INCIDENT IS THAT IT IS LIKELY TO BE PERCEIVED BY THE POLITICALLY AWARE AS AN ABORTIVE ATTEMPT BY THE LOPEZ PORTILLO GOVERNMENT (OR BY REYES HEROLES) TO REVERSE AN ACTION OF FORMER PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA. END SUMMARY.

1. GOM IS NOT GOING TO REINSTATE THE JULIO SCHERER GARCIA - LED GROUP OF JOURNALISTS IN THE EXCELSIOR COOPERATIVE. FROM CONVERSATIONS WITH SOURCES IN THE INTERIOR SECRETARIAT, WITH BOARD MEMBERS OF PROCESO (SCHERER GARCIA'S NEWS MAGAZINE) WITH THE EXCELSIOR STAFF, AND WITH OTHER
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POLITICAL CONTACTS, WE ARE SATISFIED THAT INTERIOR SECRETARY REYES HEROLES DID DISCUSS WITH SCHERER HIS RETURNING TO EXCELSIOR (AS REPORTED IN NY TIMES ARTICLE MAY 14) BUT THAT, REYES EITHER ACTED WITHOUT THE PRESIDENT'S APPROVAL AND AGAINST PRESIDENT'S WISHES, OR FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF TIMES ARTICLE IN EXCELSIOR, GOM DECIDED TO DESIST.

2. INTERIOR SECRETARIAT OFFICIAL TOLD EMBOFF MAY 24 THAT REYES HEROLES DID HOLD DISCUSSIONS WITH FORMER EXCELSIOR EDITOR JULIO SCHERER GARCIA ABOUT EXCELSIOR COOPERATIVE, INCLUDING SCHERER GARCIA'S POSSIBLE RETURN, BUT DESCRIBED CONVERSATIONS AS EFFORT TO RECONCILE AND UNIFY CONFLICTING PARTIES TOTALLY CONSISTENT AND COMPATIBLE WITH PRESIDENTIAL POLICY OF NATIONAL UNIFICATION. THIS EXPLANATION ALSO APPEARS IN THE MAY 25 AND 26 EDITION OF A POLITICAL COLUMN WHICH OFTEN REFLECTS THE VIEWS OF THE INTERIOR SECRETARIAT. THE INTERIOR OFFICIAL ALSO MADE POINT OF OBSERVING PRESIDENT HAD NOT SANCTIONED REYES' ACTION. ANOTHER INTERIOR OFFICIAL SAID PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO HAD NO INTENTION OF BRINGING SCHERER BACK AND THAT THE "MOST CHARITABLE EXPLANATION" OF REYES' BEHAVIOR WAS THAT HE STARTED RUMOR TO WARN CURRENT EXCELSIOR LEADERSHIP OF GOVERNMENT'S DISPLEASURE OVER EDITORIAL POLICY. (IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT BOTH OFFICIALS OWE THEIR POSITIONS TO THE PRESIDENT RATHER THAN TO REYES).

3. EXCELSIOR STAFFERS WHO HAVE SPOKEN WITH EMBOFFS HAVE BEEN CONFIDENT, ALMOST BOASTFUL, THAT SCHERER GARCIA IS NOT RETURNING TO EXCELSIOR. THEY CLEARLY SEEM TO FEEL THAT TACTIC OF PRINTING NY TIMES STORY IN EXCELSIOR (SEE REF) HAS FORCED GOM TO RECONSIDER AND DESIST.

4. PROCESO OFFICIAL WITH WHOM EMBOFFS HAVE PERSONAL, AS WELL AS PROFESSIONAL, RELATIONSHIP WAS UNCHARACTERISTICALLY GLOOMY AND UNCOMMUNICATIVE WHEN ASKED CONFIDENTIAL

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ABOUT MATTER ON MAY 23. WHILE PROFESSING NOT TO KNOW WHAT GOM WOULD DO FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF NY TIMES STORY, NOR WHY SCHERER HAD COOPERATED WITH RIDING ON STORY, HE TOOK SOUR GRAPES ATTITUDE ABOUT RETURNING TO EXCELSIOR, EXPRESSING A PREFERENCE FOR THE LESS TIME-CONSUMING WORK WITH PROCESO.

5. ACCORDING TO ABOVE PROCESO OFFICIAL, AND TO FORMER FEDERAL DEPUTY FRIENDLY WITH REYES HEROLES, MEXICAN AMBASSADOR TO ITALY AND CONFIDANT OF FORMER PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA, FAUSTO ZAPATA, HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO ARRANGE EUROPEAN LOAN FOR CURRENT EXCELSIOR LEADERSHIP.

6. COMMENT: BECAUSE THERE ARE NO DISINTERESTED OBSERVERS, EXPLANATIONS OF THIS BIZARRE INCIDENT VARY WIDELY. HOW INCIDENT IS PERCEIVED BY THE POLITICALLY AWARE WILL BE AS IMPORTANT AS WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED. ONE INTERPRETATION IS THAT REYES NOT ONLY ACTED WITHOUT PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORITY AND AGAINST PRESIDENTIAL WISHES,

BUT ALSO HANDLED THE MATTER SO CLUMSILY AS TO EXPOSE THE GOM TO RIDICULE. WHILE IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE REYES COULD HAVE ERRED SO BADLY, RUMORS ARE CIRCULATING THAT REYES IS ON HIS WAY OUT (SEE SEPTTEL).

7. INCIDENT IS ALSO LIKELY TO BE SEEN IN CONTEXT OF THE STRAIN BETWEEN PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO AND FORMER PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA AS ABORTIVE ATTEMPT BY THE JLP GOVERNMENT TO REVERSE ONE OF THE MORE MACHIAVELLIAN POLITICAL MANEUVERS OF THE ECHEVERRIA GOVERNMENT. WHATEVER THE INTERPRETATION, IN A COUNTRY WHICH DISDAINS POLITICAL INEPTITUDE, THE INCIDENT DOES NOT REFLECT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MEXICO 08630

FAVORABLY ON PRESIDENT AND HIS CHIEF POLITICAL MINISTER.
CALDERHEAD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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Drafter: n/a
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Review Release Date: n/a
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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2003162
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EXCELSIOR INCIDENT
TAGS: PINT, SOPN, PGOV, MX, EXCELSIOR, (SCHERER GARCIA, JULIO), (REYES HEROLES, JESUS), (LOPEZ PORTILLO Y PACHECO, JOSE)
To: STATE USCONS MEXICO BY POUCH
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c8e90773-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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